**Florida**  
Department of Highway Safety  
and Motor Vehicles  
*Division of Motorist Services*

**PROCEDURE**  
VSRS-14  
**SUBJECT:**  
VESSEL REGISTRATION EXEMPTIONS

**DESCRIPTION AND USE:**  
THIS PROCEDURE IS PROVIDED TO ASSIST TAX COLLECTOR EMPLOYEES, LICENSE PLATE AGENTS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES IN UNDERSTANDING VESSEL REGISTRATION EXEMPTIONS.

**I.  PROVISIONS OF LAW:**

*Section 328.48(1)(a), Florida Statutes*, provides that a registration is not required for any vessel that is not used on the waters of this state.

*Section 328.48(2), Florida Statutes*, provides that each vessel operated, used or stored on the waters of this state must be registered as a commercial or recreational vessel as defined in this chapter and *Section 327.02, Florida Statutes*, unless it meets one of the exemptions in section II.

**II.  REGISTRATION EXEMPTIONS:**

A. A vessel operated, used and stored exclusively on private lakes and ponds.

B. A vessel owned by the United States Government.

C. A vessel used EXCLUSIVELY as a ship’s lifeboat.

D. A non-motor powered vessel less than 16 feet in length or a non-motor-powered canoe, kayak, racing shell or rowing scull, regardless of length.

**EXCEPTION:**  
*Section 379.361(2)(c), Florida Statutes*, provides that any vessel (even non-motor powered), harvesting restricted species in excess of any bag limit or when fishing under a commercial quota or in commercial quantities shall have a commercial vessel registration.

**Historical Revisions:**

1/13/10 Updated “Description and Use” section, added and updated applicable statutes and language in sections I and II, and corrected statute cited in Exception.

*Revision(s) to this procedure: Statutory Review. Added links to statutes and Historical Revisions section.*

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